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MICHIGAN LAW REVIEW

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NOTE AND COMMENT

A SPURIOUS LAW COURSE.—A pamphlet entitled "University of Michigan Law Course," printed by one Edwards, of Ann Arbor, has come to our notice.

In this pamphlet there are offered for sale what are represented to be law lectures by members of the faculty of the Department of Law of the University of Michigan.

The publication is calculated to deceive one as to the real character of these so-called lectures; for anyone unfamiliar with the true state of affairs would get the impression from reading this pamphlet that the lectures offered for sale are those now being delivered in this department, and that they have been revised and corrected by the lecturers who delivered them. As a matter of fact, however, these "lectures" are manufactured from notes taken by students in former days, before the present methods of instruction now used in this law school were adopted. They are in most instances incomplete and very inaccurate. Some of the "lectures" are by men long since deceased, and some are by men who have not been connected with the University of Michigan for some years.

The advertising matter states that the lectures "were revised, corrected, abridged or expanded as the case required; and brought down to date by men conspicuous as teachers, practitioners and authors."

This statement as to revision, correction, etc., is absolutely false as to nearly everyone of the "lectures," and any fairly well trained lawyer reading them would blush with shame if he actually believed that any teachers of law could have been guilty of deliberately allowing the publication of the gross inaccuracies that are to be found in most of them.

Edwards was once permitted to issue typewritten copies of notes of lectures taken by students for use in the class-room; when they were used in this way correction could be made of errors in reporting, and, as thus corrected, the notes were of some use to the students in their studies. They could be, however, of very little use to anyone outside the class, and it was distinctly understood by the man who now offers them for sale that these typewritten notes could be sold by him to students of this department only.

Finding now that changed methods have taken away his occupation here, he tries to palm off on unsuspecting youths who "study law at home" these antiquated, inaccurate and discarded notes, calling them lectures.

Notice has been given to Edwards to discontinue his mischievous scheme, and legal proceedings will be taken if necessary to stop the sale of these notes. Meanwhile students who are compelled to study law at home had better get in touch with some good correspondence school, or, at least, employ their time in reading something that a law-writer has actually written and revised rather than waste it in getting from these "lectures" erroneous ideas on legal subjects.

J. H. B.

RAILROAD TAXATION IN MICHIGAN AND WISCONSIN.—After several years of somewhat intense discussion of the methods of taxing railroads the people of Wisconsin by their legislature in 1903 passed a law providing for the taxation of such property by a state board of assessors, Chap. 315, Laws of Wisconsin, 1903. The law directed that the property should be valued as a unit, provided a method of determining the portion of such property which had a taxable situs in the state, empowered said board to ascertain the cash value of the general property in the state and the aggregate tax thereon for all purposes, state and local, and that the railroad property should pay the rate thus found to be the average rate paid by the general property in the state.

The constitutionality of this law has recently been sustained by the Supreme Court of Wisconsin in a most careful, exhaustive and valuable opinion. *Chicago & N. W. Ry. Co. v. State*, 108 N. W. Rep. 557.

The Wisconsin law resembles so closely the Michigan law, Chap. 173, Public Acts of 1901, as to indicate that the Michigan law was largely followed by the Wisconsin legislature. From this fact and also because the validity of the Michigan legislation has so recently been determined it seems desirable to preface the consideration of the Wisconsin case by a brief review of the legislation, the constitutional changes and subsequent litigation in the latter state.